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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 XMB-02 EB-07 TRSE-00 /022 W
---------- 010652
P 221010Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
TO USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4295
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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VIENNA FOR EXIM

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BFOL, LU
SUBJECT: PRODUCT OPPORTUNITIES - ARBED STEEL ROLLING MILL

REF: LUX 0772, NOV. 15, 1974; LUX 0803, NOV. 26, 1974

1. ARBED ENGINEERS IN CHARGE OF STUDIES FOR PROPOSED MEDIUM ROLLING MILL INFORMED ECON OFFICER FEBRUARY 21 THAT BOTH U.S. FIRMS, BLAU-KNOX AND WEAN UNITED, CONTACTED FOR BIDS HAVE RESPONDED THAT THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON NEW ROLLING MILL. ARBED EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT NO OTHER U. S. FIRMS HAD SHOWED INTEREST THROUGH DOC IN ROLLING MILL PROJECT, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF RECESSED STATE OF U. S. ECONOMY. ARBED DIRECTION ALSO PUZZLED BY WEAN UNITED RESPONSE THAT IT "NOT IN POSITION AT THIS TIME TO SUPPLY A MILL" AND OPINED THAT REASON FOR WEAN UNITED REFUSAL MIGHT BE THAT FRENCH FIRM, SECIM, A SUBSIDIARY OF SCHNEIDER, CIE, IS A LICENSEE OF UNITED ENGINEERING AND THAT WEAN UNITED HAD DECIDED NOT TO BID BECAUSE OF RELATIONS WITH SECIM, CONTRACTUAL OR OTHERWISE. ARBED ENGINEERS TOLD ECON OFFICER CONFIDENTIALLY THAT SECIM UNLIKELY TO OBTAIN CONTRACT FOR ROLLING MILL AS ARBED HAS LITTLE CONFIDENCE IN GENERAL LEVEL OF FRENCH TECHNOLOGY IN THIS AREA. THEY ADDED THAT WEAN UNITED WOULD HAVE FAR BETTER CHANCE OF OBTAINING CONTRACT IF COMPANY BID DIRECTLY ON PROJECT RATHER THAN RELYING ON
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EUROPEAN LICENSEE. ARBED INDICATED THAT IT IS WILLING TO

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EXTEND BIDDING PERIOD FOR ANY U. S. FIRM THAT EXPRESSES AN INTEREST IN BIDDING FOR THIS ROLLING MILL.

2. WE SHARE ARBEDS SURPRISE THAT DOC CAN FIND NO U. S. MANUFACTURER OF ROLLING MILL EQUIPMENT THAT IS INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON THIS MAJOR EXPORT OPPORTUNITY. THE AMBASSADOR AND ENTIRE EMBASSY STAFF HAVE EXPENDED CONSIDERABLE EFFORT CONVINCING ARBED STEEL GIANT THAT NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY AMERICAN, AND WE ARE MYSTIFIED THAT U. S. FIRMS ARE INCAPABLE OR UNWILLING TO TRY FOR THIS LUCRATIVE MARKET.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT DOC ASCERTAIN REASONS FOR FAILURE OF BLAU-KNOX AND WEAN UNITED TO ENTER BIDDING, AND ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY ON AN URGENT BASIS U. S. FIRMS INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON A PROJECT OF A POTENTIAL VALUE OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO U. S. INDUSTRY. TARNOFF

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